



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
DARRELL V. MCGRAW, JR.
CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION
1-800-368-8808 or 304-558-8986

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General Darrell McGraw Settles With Unlicensed Contractor, Charles Roth

Attorney General Darrell McGraw announced a settlement his office reached with Charles Roth ("Roth"), an unlicensed home improvement contractor from Dunbar. Since 2001, McGraw's office has received dozens of complaints against Roth, alleging that the contractor had abandoned home improvement jobs, leaving them either unfinished or with serious defects in need of repair. After Roth refused to resolve consumers' complaints, the Consumer Protection Division sued him in 2005, and asked the Circuit Court of Putnam County to permanently enjoin Roth from violating state law.

Roth advertised his business in newspapers and telephone directories as "Valley Pools & Spas," "V P Enterprises," and other names. After being contacted by interested consumers, Roth visited their homes and submitted low bids to install pools, waterproofing jobs, and other home improvements. After hearing Roth's low prices and promises of "fifteen year" warranties, consumers eagerly signed contracts with him and made large downpayments. Many consumers complained that once the work began and Roth had received significant payments on his contracts, he became increasingly difficult to reach. Others complained that when Roth did finish a job, the work was shoddy – equipment was installed backwards, the pools leaked and the concrete crumbled.

Many of Roth's bids and contract proposals represented that he had "Contractor's License Number "WV30970" or "WV31182." However, inquiries to the Contractor's Licensing Board revealed that those license numbers were invalid, and that Roth's contractor's license was revoked in 2002.

Under the terms of the Agreed Order entered by the Honorable O.C. Spaulding, Roth is permanently enjoined from engaging in the home improvement business and must pay \$80,000 in civil penalties and restitution to consumers. Roth's first payment of \$10,000 is due Friday, April 6, 2007. Thereafter, Roth has to pay \$300.00 monthly installments until the judgment is satisfied. The court's order also requires Roth to notify the State of any new acquisition of assets and to inform the Attorney General's office of any change of address.

"Some contractors view consumers as sitting ducks, ready to pay out their hard-earned dollars, only to be deceived," said McGraw. "Consumers should be wary of low bids and big promises, especially during the spring building season."

Consumers who need to file complaints against home improvement contractors are encouraged to call Attorney General McGraw's Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-368-8808 or 304-558-8986. Consumers may also write to P.O. Box 1789, Charleston, WV 25326-1789, e-mail, consumer@wvago.gov, or visit the Attorney General's website at www.wvago.gov. The Attorney General's website offers tips to help consumers avoid problems as they seek contractors to perform work on their homes.

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